

STARK FLOOR REMARKS ON BUSH VETO

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WASHINGTON,
D.C. — Representative Pete Stark (D-CA), Chairman of the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, delivered the following remarks today on the House floor in response to President Bush's veto of Congressional legislation to extend the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

"I want to remind my colleagues that we're dealing with a President who has a very short memory.

Just
two days ago, he proclaimed October 1st as Child Health Day 2007 and today he just trashed that. I don't know what he thought he was doing when he talked about improving the lives of children and preventing disease and promoting community health, because he's just following a position that denies a million kids the right to health care.

I hope, Mr. President, that you certainly don't proclaim a 'Protect Congress Day' or we're all in deep trouble.

This
veto of the Children's Health Insurance Program compromise legislation has finally shown the American people the President's true priorities. He is a war President and that's all he cares about is war and more

war.

The previous speaker talked about \$190 billion dollars for the War in Iraq and these funds aren't paid for. They add to the deficit. In addition to our children having to look around for health care, they're going to have to look around to pay for that illegal war.

He has simultaneously vetoed a bill that would extend the State Children's Health Insurance Program. This bill:

- Would extend health care to nearly 4 million uninsured children while the President is cutting a million off,
- Costs a fraction of his illegal war,
- Is fully paid for so that it doesn't increase the deficit one penny, and
- Passed both the House and the Senate with strong bipartisan majorities.

What's wrong with our Republican minority? Why do they insist on denying a million children, kicking them off the rolls of SCHIP?

Why do they go in the face of 43 of the nation's governors who have written to the President and argued against his vetoing this bill?

President Bush said he has his own plan. I don't know if he had it when he declared October 1st as Child Health Day. Whatever that plan is, it would cause millions of children to lose their health care.

My own Republican Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, estimates that the President's plan would cause a million children to be denied health care in California by the year 2012.

This is a matter of life and death for our children. Children with health care do better in school, in life, and have their illnesses caught before it is too late. Ladies and gentlemen, the axis of evil is not just in the Middle East, it is right down here on Pennsylvania Avenue.

I
urge my colleagues to reject the President's veto and have a compromise
bill to assure that the health of America's children and make sure that
it is put ahead of some obscure, extreme, radical, ideology."